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*Archives + Records
Center
Records - Management*

20 May 1968

STATINTL

MEMORANDUM FOR:

I have reviewed rather carefully the survey report of the Agency Archives and Records Center and I am sorry to say that I find it rather disappointing. I find very little here that we didn't already know before the study was conducted. Many of the conclusions of the study we had reached before the study was undertaken and some of them were, in fact, among the reasons we asked that the study be done in the first place. Many of the conclusions and recommendations are offered gratuitously without any apparent foundation in fact or logic developed in the main part of the paper.

Paragraph 17a(1) says, for example, that records disposition has been and will continue to remain the element of primary concern in the Agency Records Management Program yet elsewhere in the paper we recommend that this should change and we should concentrate on retention plans. Paragraph 17b, Recommendation No. 1 specifically recommends the development of an Agency records retention plan. I find nothing in the paper to tell me what a retention plan is, what it is supposed to do, how it is supposed to work, or anything else about it that would be useful in evaluating the recommendation.

The second conclusion under paragraph 17 is an assumption which we have made for some time. I find nothing in the paper to show how many boxes were examined from what components in accordance with what schedules which would substantiate the validity of this conclusion. Also, implicit in this conclusion is a severe criticism of the records series and schedules if it is true that there is a lack of standards in definition and identification. I have said this many times and I believe it is true but it is basically an assumption which this paper neither validates nor invalidates.

The first conclusion under paragraph 18 says that the Center is administered and managed effectively and no actions need to be taken with regard to administrative policy. The second conclusion and the others following seem to me to be in direct contradiction. The second conclusion says that the Center has attempted to operate in a void created through a lack of policy direction. If there has been such a total lack of policy direction it is inconceivable to me that the conclusion which says that no action needs to be taken with regard to administrative policy could be offered in the same paper. I see nothing

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to be gained by itemizing other items of specific inconsistency, contradiction, repetition and redundancy. You will see from notes attached to the pages of the report that I have made many specific comments and raised some questions. The six page transmittal memorandum could be reduced to about three paragraphs. Most of it is repeated word for word in the body of the paper itself. The footnoting is awkward. The technique of using footnotes to elaborate points in the text is confusing and difficult. I am accustomed to using footnotes to cite authorities, not develop argumentation.

Please note that the report does not bear a security classification. I believe this is a serious breach of security.

After you have reviewed the report again with my comments and questions I would like to discuss it with you.

/s/

RHW

Attachment
DDS/SSS/RHW:jms (20 May 1968)
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